El Salvador
March 2023
Operational Update #3

People of all ages participated in the recreational, sports and artistic activities in the Community of Los Angeles, Soyapango.
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Key Figures

Community-based Protection

171 individuals assisted through UNHCR's helpline in March, and 693 in 2023.

305 people assisted at the Support Spaces March, and 652 in 2023.

9,479 people reached by the Mobile Units operating from the Support Spaces across the country in March, and 21,240 in 2023.

Cash Assistance

355 households (**1,225** individuals) at heightened risk received cash assistance in March, and 693 households (1,886 individuals) in 2023. This support helps cover basic needs such as food, rent, documentation, and transportation, as well as to facilitate livelihoods activities for economic integration and education.

Registration

183 people registered with biometrics, and 523 in 2023.

Funding

9% of UNHCR's financial requirements for El Salvador received by 28 March 2023.

Highlights

- **The Supreme Court of Justice in partnership with UNHCR organized in San Salvador the first of three conventions for community judicial facilitators to be held in 2023.** Authorities, including the Ombudsperson (PDDH), the Civil Attorney (PGR), Magistrates of the Supreme Court, and the OAS delegate, and 150 community judicial facilitators attended the convention. Through this alliance, UNHCR will expand its outreach network in the field to raise awareness on displacement issues, identify protection cases and support conflict mediation in remote locations.

- **UNHCR, World Vision and the municipality of Soyapango inaugurated the refurbished communal house and children's playground in Los Angeles community.** This improved facility provides a safe and adequate space for community gatherings, workshops, recreational and cultural activities for community members of different ages, gender and backgrounds.

- **UNHCR and IRC participated in three community fairs "By your Side" in San Miguel, San Vicente and Santa Ana.** More than 1,360 people and 47 local entrepreneurs had access to counselling and information on services.

- **COMCAVIS TRANS opened a UNHCR-supported community centre for LGBTIQ+ people in San Salvador.** This safe space aims to foster participation and integration to strengthen protection networks. The centre will be available to other LGBTIQ+ organizations to run workshops and strengthen their community processes.

The new community centre is a space of opportunity and learning for LGBTIQ+ people in El Salvador.
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Gender roundtable in La Unión
©UNHCR/ David Ardón

Protect

- **The Women's Development Institute (ISDEMU) along UNHCR and the Municipal Gender Roundtable in La Unión held a discussion session on judicial protection from gender-based violence and how to foster access to complaints for displaced survivors.** Fifty-four people took part, mostly justices of peace, public prosecutors, and specialised police.
- **UNHCR was invited to provide technical support to El Salvador Government's efforts in leading the Working Group on Family Reunification and Alternative Pathways for Migration, activated under the Los Angeles Declaration.** UNHCR, UNICEF and IOM are working with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in drafting the group's work plan.

Inauguration of communal house in Los Angeles, Soyapango.
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Respond

- **UNHCR joined the General Directorate of Migration and Foreigners and other organizations in a services fair during the distribution of transit permits to 280 Honduran children and adolescents who entered El Salvador to access basic services.** UNHCR and IRC provided information and orientation on access to rights and identified three cases in need of international protection.

Empower

- **UNHCR and FUNDASAL launched the 2023 School on Human Rights, Leadership, and Community Organization in San Miguel, San Salvador, Santa Ana and Sonsonate.** More than 100 community leaders enrolled will participate in the six-month programme to develop skills and knowledge on community projects, human rights, forced displacement, leadership, and prevention of gender-based violence.
- **UNHCR and World Vision launched the Community Sports project targeting children and youth in Soyapango, Mejicanos, San Salvador, San Miguel and Santa Ana.** The project aims at preventing forced recruitment and providing psychosocial support for 540 children and young people in stigmatized communities.
- **UNHCR along with World Vision held movie sessions and forums in eight communities of San Salvador, Mejicanos, Ciudad Delgado and Santa Ana.** Over 200 people participated in the events and discussed gender roles and discrimination at the workplace and in communities.

Solve

- **The President of the National Commission for Micro and Small Business (CONAMYPE) and UNHCR inaugurated in San Salvador a fully equipped public centre to help entrepreneurs produce textiles.** Following a donation of cutting-edge equipment by UNHCR in 2021, this centre will further production of small entrepreneurs, and it also will enhance the textile cluster "SMODA."
- **The Ministry of Labour and UNHCR, with the support of World Vision, held Youth Employment Routes in San Salvador, Santa Ana and San Miguel.** Twenty-three young people affected by displacement attended the three-day workshops facilitated by job specialists on soft skills. Following the workshop, participants enrolled in an apprenticeship programme in private companies.

Through the processes of training judicial facilitators, knowledge is strengthened to achieve active listening, negotiation and conflict resolution in the communities.
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Stories from the field

Building bridges: mediation and conflict resolution through specialized volunteers

- Juana, a 50-year-old judicial facilitator from Chalatenango, dreams of a peaceful and happy community.

"Often people argue over small things that can be solved. We help them reach agreements and solutions," she explained with a sense of determination in her voice.

She works as a volunteer judicial facilitator and helps people in her community resolve conflicts that vary in size and complexity.

When the conflict can't be fixed by a facilitator, it's referred to a court. The volunteer judicial facilitator programme, an initiative implemented by the Supreme Court of Justice and supported by UNHCR, gathers 600 community volunteers around El Salvador, like Juana. Through this programme they strengthen their capacities on legal issues, conflict resolution and how to provide close support to people.

"In my community, I have seen people who have had to flee the country due to gang violence, to protect their lives", she explains emotionally.

Juana accompanied them, asserting their rights and referring them to different institutions. She knows first-hand the pain of forced displacement, as her own son had to leave five years ago and sought asylum in other country.

By offering capacity-building to this network of volunteers, UNHCR aims to raise awareness about internally displaced people's rights, and the available services.

"I believe in building bridges, not walls," says Juana. "We need to work together to create a better world for ourselves and our children." As a judicial facilitator, she is bringing people together to find common ground and solutions.

Juana, volunteer judicial facilitator, helps people in her community in conflict resolution.
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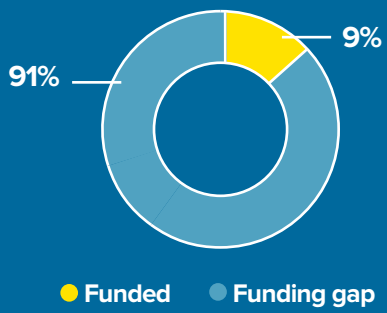
Funding

- **In 2023, UNHCR is appealing for USD 26 million to provide protection, response, empowerment and solutions to refugees, asylum-seekers, and forcibly displaced persons in El Salvador.** The best way to support UNHCR's appeal is through unearmarked contributions. Such flexible funding at global level is key in allowing a timely response to the evolving needs wherever required.



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